

ESNEFTlife

Issue 12: Summer 2024



Keeping x-ray close to home

New machine arrives at Aldeburgh Hospital:
Pages 2&3



Scared teen to student nurse



Celebrating our volunteers



Donors dig deep for doctor



Robotic surgery recovery success



Providing modern x-ray technology closer to home

New machine opens at community hospital, thanks to local generosity

A new, modern x-ray machine at Aldeburgh Hospital is keeping diagnostic testing in the community and preventing long round trips to Ipswich Hospital for patients.

ESNEFT created the x-ray suite using a £320,000 gift to Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity from the Aldeburgh Hospital League of Friends.

The new machine uses all the latest digital technology. Its installation means people in Aldeburgh and the surrounding areas can continue to have key diagnostic tests closer to home.

Sandra Chandler (pictured above with radiographer Alison Oughton), from Tunstall, was the first patient to benefit from the new machine. Without it, she would have had to make



a 30-minute, 28-mile round trip to Ipswich Hospital to have an x-ray on her pelvis.



"I'm so glad I've been able to come here," said Sandra.

It means I don't have to travel all the way to Ipswich, saving time and money. It is so convenient."

Tony Bone, president of Aldeburgh Hospital League of Friends, said: "The League of Friends is very pleased to be able to fund this replacement of the x-ray machine at Aldeburgh Hospital, having funded the original machine over 20 years ago. Having diagnostic testing close to the community makes a huge difference and avoids trips of 20 miles or more into Ipswich."

Mair Dawson, chair of the League of Friends, added: "We are very grateful to our generous supporters who enable us to keep our local hospital up-to-date and state-of-the-art."

Karen Lough, Director of Operations at ESNEFT, said:

We are delighted with the new x-ray machine, which will make a big difference to local people and help us further improve the care we are able to provide."

Mandy Jordan, Associate Director for Charities and Voluntary Services with ESNEFT, said: "We would like to say a big thank you to the League of Friends for their generosity. Their kindness will make a big difference to local people by helping make sure they can benefit from the latest technology close to home."

One stop shop focuses on falls prevention

Patients at risk of falling in east Suffolk can now get help for a wide variety of health, social and wellbeing issues in a single place.



ESNEFT's Woodbridge Holistic Assessment Team (WHAT) has launched the one-stop clinic to bring holistic care closer to home. Taking place monthly, it gives patients the chance to be assessed by several different healthcare professionals in one session.

The team provides any necessary care and treatment, in partnership with the voluntary sector and/or social services, so a patient receives all the help they need to enjoy a better quality of life.

Heather Thompson, lead community nurse, helps to run WHAT. She said:

The clinic is a really valuable one stop shop where people at risk of falling can have a holistic assessment and see lots of different disciplines in one day.

"This means they only need to tell their story once and will then receive wrap-around care from all the right services."

The clinic is open to anyone in the Woodbridge area who is at risk of falling. This includes tripping, stumbling or issues with balance. People can refer or self-refer by emailing WHAT@suffolk.gov.uk



To contact the team behind this magazine, please email communications@esneft.nhs.uk

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Celebrating the work of our dedicated volunteers

Tireless support lifts patients, visitors, and staff up every day

Volunteer with us

How you can get involved

We are looking for mealtime support and 'This is me' volunteers at the moment.

Our mealtime volunteers give extra support to our patients with eating and drinking. They are given specific training, including different ways to encourage patients to eat, and will be on wards during busy times of day, talking to patients and staff.

Our 'This is me' volunteers support our nursing teams to offer personalised care to patients living with dementia. Filling out the 'This is me' paperwork helps to give patients a voice, highlighting to clinicians what their interests are and helping to support conversation.

To express your interest, email volunteers@esneft.nhs.uk with your name, phone number and the role you'd be interested in.

Did you know more than 400 people volunteer at ESNEFT? Our volunteers fulfil a wide variety of roles, from ward support and clinic helpers to admin roles, gardeners, and Pets as Therapy volunteers.

They give us the gift of their time for many different reasons, but the thing they all have in common is they want to be able to help people during what can be a very difficult time. Among them are Sue Cotton and Kieran Sowter.

Kieran Sowter

Kieran volunteers in A&E at Colchester Hospital. The 29-year-old chats to patients, makes drinks and helps staff by wiping down beds and restocking kit.

"I started volunteering as I wanted to feel the satisfaction of helping to brighten someone's day," said Kieran, who is stationed at Colchester Barracks with 16 Air Assault Brigade.

"I really enjoy chatting to the patients, particularly those who are on their own. They are all so grateful and appreciate the fact that you're able to spend some time with them, as sometimes just having a conversation can make a big difference.

"I thoroughly enjoy volunteering and wish I'd done it sooner. I'd 100% recommend it to anyone who has some time to spare."



Sue Cotton

Sue has been helping at Ipswich Hospital for eight years. She became a mealtime volunteer after noticing that food was often left on patients' plates. She said:

"Not every patient needs one-to-one help with eating, but even just opening butter or helping them spread it creates a happier mealtime and less food waste."



"I know from my previous time spent on the ward how vital the mealtime volunteer role is. It will help patients to get stronger and hopefully be discharged home sooner, as well as freeing up nurses' time.

"I really enjoy direct contact with patients and enjoy helping others. I would happily recommend the role to anyone – it's so rewarding."



Lewis' post-pandemic pride as he pulls on student nurse lanyard

23-year-old on his way to fulfilling healthcare career dream

Lewis Boreham joined the NHS as a shy and scared 19-year-old in 2020.

He worked through the COVID-19 pandemic as a healthcare assistant. He's now on his way to becoming a nurse. His vital role at ESNEFT is what put him on the path to his dream career in healthcare.

When he arrived at Ipswich Hospital, the country was in the depths of the first lockdown and after a short induction, he was asked to work on a COVID-19 ward in May 2020.

Lewis said: "That idea was terrifying. I didn't know what to expect. At the time I was still living at home and my mum made my bed for me, then I was the one making beds and washing people.

"It was such an alien environment and I felt out of my depth to begin with. The first patient I saw with COVID-19, I froze. I was

face to face with this thing that had shut down the country."

Lewis, who lives in Stowmarket, was that all important someone to many patients who were alone in hospital at the end of their lives. He said:

"I remember the first time that happened. It hits hard. You don't know what they have been through before that. You think about their history, through to that point in their life. There's a privilege in it. There's few job roles where you get to be that person for someone."

He credits his time as a healthcare assistant with establishing "the basics" he now needs as a student nurse.

He said: "I have always wanted to do my bit and help people in any way I can. What better career to do it in than nursing." Lewis is studying for his degree in nursing at the University of Suffolk.

He is passionate about education and dementia care, having previously worked as a dementia specialist support worker. While he's keen to specialise in the future, he already knows he would like to get into teaching.

Where could a career in nursing take you?

Find out more about one of the most dynamic and rewarding roles within the NHS by scanning the QR code.



Organ and tissue donors thanked for giving gift of life through art

Staff and families joined by ITFC legend as new installation unveiled

Former England and Ipswich Town footballer Kieron Dyer joined staff and families at the unveiling of a new art installation at Ipswich Hospital to honour organ and tissue donors.

The glass structure, named The Heart of the Matter, was created by Suffolk artist Arabella Marshall and commissioned by ESNEFT's Organ Donation Committee.

Dyer was there to show his support for organ donation, having had a liver transplant (following a chronic liver condition diagnosis which has no cure) in 2023.

Dr Martin Mansfield, chair of the Organ Donation Committee and Deputy Chief Medical Officer at ESNEFT, said:

“ Placing the heart in this space seems a most appropriate thank you to organ donors and their families, and by putting the artwork in the window its beauty and the generosity it celebrates does not just belong to those in the hospital. It is for everyone outside to enjoy too.”

Dr Paul Carroll, consultant in intensive care and lead for organ donation at Ipswich Hospital added: “We are delighted to be able to say a very heartfelt thank you to all organ and tissue donors and their loved ones through this art installation.”



The heart's creator, Arabella, added there is no one way to look at the piece.

She said: “Indeed, the more I look the more I discover new things myself, but it is certainly about each and every individual piece being essential to form the whole.

“The glass ‘heart’ is not balanced or perfect but is the more beautiful for that, just like our own dented hearts have to mend over and over again from great suffering – taking us to greater depths of understanding and love.”

The heart shaped glass artwork has been placed in the foyer immediately outside the critical care unit at Ipswich Hospital.

Study looks into life-saving vaccine for babies

Mum Emily Cherrington was happy to say yes to her newborn baby George taking part in the iGBS3 research study looking into a potential vaccine for Group B Strep.

Emily, who is also a midwife at Ipswich Hospital, said she understands the benefits of being involved in research - especially as Group B Strep can have serious implications for babies.

More than 800 families are taking part in the study, making ESNEFT one of the highest recruiters.

Emily, 32, said: “If the study helps with developing a vaccine it will be such a positive step for babies, mothers, and health workers too.”

The study involves taking a small sample of blood from the umbilical cord after a baby is born and a small sample of blood taken from babies who have Group B Strep infection.

Anneka Burch is the lead research midwife working on the iGBS3 study at ESNEFT. She said: “We know how serious Group B Strep can be. It is the most common cause of life-threatening infection in newborn babies in the UK.

“We’re very pleased we’ve recruited so many families to this study as it will help provide crucial information to help develop a vaccine for Group B Strep.”



‘Going home on the same day of my surgery was right for me’

Mum, 56, shares her experience of having robotic hysterectomy

A mum-of-three was back at home with her feet up on the sofa within hours of having major abdominal surgery.

Ceri Fishlock, 56, has recovered from her recent hysterectomy so well that she was able to return to working from home earlier than planned.

It was carried out by a specialist team using a surgical robot at Colchester Hospital, run by ESNEFT.

Ceri was in theatre at 7.30am, on a ward by 11.30am and then back at home in Clacton by 5pm.

Ceri, who works for Essex County Council, said:

“ It’s been great for me – both having the surgery done robotically and coming home the same day. I would recommend it to people.”

“No one was pushy in saying I had to go home – I wanted to. It was nice there was that personal element about me as a person, not just the process.

“You do still need to take things

fairly easily, but your recovery is definitely better in your own home. I felt fine in myself and like I could do anything and everything after just a couple of weeks.”

Ceri’s surgery was done during a bumper weekend of operating lists that saw seven robotic hysterectomies performed in two days. Out of the seven, three patients – including Ceri – were able to go home on the same day of their surgery.

ESNEFT’s cancer lead, consultant gynaecologist and obstetrician Miss Ballari Ghosh, led the high intensity team (HIT) weekend.

She said: “Patient safety was our top priority when we planned for this weekend. We reviewed every patient in advance, carefully assessing their suitability for both robotic surgery and same day discharge.

“This new way of working was a first for the gynaecology service at ESNEFT. It will help us to not only reduce our waiting lists but improve patient experience too. One of many benefits of robotic surgery is that it’s less invasive and so, generally, a patient’s recovery time is faster.”



Robotic skills masterclass puts surgical innovation in spotlight

Perfecting bowel cancer surgery and delivering the best possible care to cancer patients was top of the agenda at an international masterclass.

Organised by ESNEFT’s colorectal team at Ipswich Hospital and led by consultant

Mr Arshad Malik, who specialises in robotic, laparoscopic colorectal and general surgery, the Colorectal Technical Skills Masterclass attracted delegates from as far away as India.

Speakers included world-leading expert Professor Amjad Parvaiz and Mr Michael Powar, a consultant colorectal surgeon at Cambridge University Hospitals.

“This unique event focused on the technical aspects of surgery,” said Mr Malik.

“It served as a testament to the advancements we have made at ESNEFT in modernising our facilities and introducing cutting-edge robotic treatments for our cancer patients.

“ Our goal was to demonstrate the best practices for performing these operations, ensuring that no cancer cells are left behind and that the tumour is completely removed.”

The masterclass took place at Colchester Hospital’s ICENI Centre.



Patient on research study shares her story about the cancer 'no one talks about'

Findings will inform future treatment and others about disease

Caroline Hyde was aware of bowel cancer.

She'd followed Deborah James – also known as Bowel Babe – and her experience of being diagnosed, having treatment, and her death from the disease in June 2022.

So, when Caroline noticed blood in her poo and experienced pain, she was concerned she may have bowel cancer too. However, the mum-of-four from Clacton, was eventually diagnosed, not with bowel cancer, but anal cancer.

The 53-year-old had radiotherapy and chemotherapy at Colchester Hospital and is part of the PLATO ACT5 research study looking into treatment options. She said:

“I started to get blood in my poo, then found a little lump between my vagina and bum. At first it was thought it was a pile, but sitting down became increasingly painful and I started making loads of adjustments like sitting on a donut cushion and having to stand up all the time.”

After a referral to the hospital and a biopsy, Caroline was diagnosed with anal cancer in October 2022. The first step of her treatment was having an operation to fit a stoma bag just before Christmas 2022.

Caroline was also asked if she'd like to join the PLATO ACT5 study looking at the different levels of radiotherapy given to patients. The study was randomised, meaning Caroline didn't have a choice whether she'd receive the standard level of radiotherapy or an increased dose.

“I said don't tell me. I didn't want to know as obviously I wanted to have the increased dose,” she added.

“I know now I had the standard level, but being on the research study was positive as it meant I had my research nurse Celine as a constant point of contact the whole way through. She was amazing.”

Caroline has also been supported through her treatment by her family. She said: “I've had some dark thoughts along the way, but I've had the attitude that I've got to get on with it and get through it. I'm really pleased to say I've had the absolutely wonderful news that I'm now cancer free.”

Following in the footsteps of Bowel Babe, Caroline started a TikTok to share her journey through treatment. She said:

“People don't talk about anal cancer. I'd never heard of anal cancer before in my life. I want to share for others going through the same thing as me.”

Caroline will now have regular scans to check the cancer hasn't returned.



What's the study all about?

The PLATO ACT5 study is looking at whether the normal level of radiotherapy or a higher dose of radiotherapy is more effective in treating more advanced anal cancer.

Research participants have radiotherapy and chemotherapy over five and a half weeks, every day from Monday to Friday. The first results of the trial will be available next year.

Celine Driscoll (pictured right) is a research radiographer and oncology clinical trials team leader at ESNEFT. She said:

“Caroline is an amazing woman and has shown incredible strength to get through the treatment in the way she did.”



Consultant clinical oncologist Sadaf Usman is the principal investigator of the study at ESNEFT. She added: “It's really encouraging to read Caroline's story and to see her going through the treatment. I'm sure it will be for other patients as well. Studies like PLATO are a ray of light for these cancers with unmet needs.”

Symptoms of anal cancer



- Bleeding from your bottom
- Itching and pain around your anus
- Small lumps around and inside your bottom
- A discharge of mucus from your bottom
- Having problems controlling when you poo (bowel incontinence)
- Needing to poo often with looser, runnier poos

See a GP if:

- You have symptoms of anal cancer
- You notice a change around your anus that is not normal for you

Harmful greenhouse gas removed from hospital theatres

A harmful greenhouse gas used in 'traditional' anaesthetics is no longer in use at Colchester and Ipswich hospitals.

Nitrous oxide has been used for many years as an anaesthetic. But the gas is extremely harmful, causing damage to the ozone layer and contributing to global warming.

So, anaesthetists at ESNEFT have stopped using it and are opting for greener alternatives.

Parents-to-be can be reassured nitrous oxide, known as entonox or gas and air when used in childbirth, can still be used during labour as a form of pain relief.

Dr Kate Gardner is a consultant anaesthetist at Colchester Hospital. She said:

“Nitrous oxide is incredibly damaging and has 300 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. It remains in the atmosphere for 114 years.”

“It also has some unpleasant side effects including increasing postoperative nausea. It has been used as part of a traditional anaesthetic since the 1860s despite more favourable alternatives being available. In recent years the impact on global warming and climate change has come to the fore and many anaesthetists have stopped using it altogether.”



Nitrous oxide is responsible for 2% of the carbon footprint of the NHS and 75% of the anaesthetic gas footprint. Theatre teams have stopped using it as part of the commitment by the NHS to be carbon net zero by 2040.

Patients benefit from varicose vein treatment closer to home

Operations carried out 'quickly and easily' on north Essex coast

Varicose vein treatment is now an option for patients at Clacton Hospital, meaning they won't have to travel to Colchester Hospital.

The additional clinics have been set up at the seaside hospital to offer treatment nearer patients' homes. It also means the main theatres at Colchester Hospital can be prioritised for more complex operations.

Margaret Collinson, 81, from Clacton (pictured below), needed treatment for varicose veins in her left leg. She said:

"The operation went fine – I didn't feel a thing. It took about an hour and was much easier being in Clacton than travelling to Colchester. I had a cup of tea afterwards and went home."



Varicose vein treatment no longer involves stripping them out. It is done by 'closing off the veins' using a minimally invasive method called endovenous ablation. Most patients can be treated in a clinic room environment, rather than in an operating theatre.

Vascular surgeon consultant Sohail Choksy said:

"A lot of our patients live in Clacton or the surrounding area, so this is providing care where they need it. It also means it's cost effective and efficient."



"Varicose veins can work against 'good' veins and cause aching or throbbing for patients, so being able to offer the care they need quickly in a nice environment is beneficial. It also means theatre space for bigger operations needed by other patients isn't being taken up."

Patient Jon Tokley, 54, pictured above, lived with "unbearable pain" following an ankle injury which resulted in a leg ulcer. Scans then revealed he had a defective vein that needed treatment.

He said: "This operation has completely changed my life. With the clinic opening I was able to get the operation done quickly and I'm so relieved."

"It was so much easier having it done in the clinic and the team looked after me. They were all amazing – unbelievable. I'm so grateful."

Adam's thanks for life-changing wheelchair

Essex Wheelchair Services team makes a huge difference to people's lives.

The team of ESNEFT staff provide equipment to help people be as mobile as possible – and it's worked for Adam, pictured.

He said: "I would like to thank wheelchair services from the bottom of my heart. I was able to go out with some of my friends to Colchester football club and I was able to get around with so much comfort it was amazing, I can't wait to plan more days out."

"I went on the bus and, with the chair going back,

the barber was able to give me a better shave.

"It's a brilliant chair. I can't thank you enough, honestly, thank you so, so much [for making] this all possible for me."

Tracy Freeman leads the service. She said: "We worked with the integrated care board to identify and fund the perfect powered wheelchair for Adam and this amazing photograph and words make it so worthwhile."



New light therapy helps to ease pain for head and neck cancer patients

Treatment tackles side effect caused by chemotherapy and radiotherapy

Cancer patients are benefiting from a new light therapy treatment which tackles a common side effect caused by chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

Photobiomodulation (PBM) has launched in ESNEFT hospitals to prevent or treat oral mucositis. It occurs when cancer treatments damage the lining of the mouth. This can leave the tissue vulnerable to ulceration and infection.

All head and neck cancer patients having radiotherapy are being offered PBM at Colchester and Ipswich hospitals. The treatments are being overseen by Jenny Gale, radiotherapy sister at Colchester, and Lyndsey Rew, Macmillan specialist radiographer at Ipswich.

Jenny is also interim head and neck clinical nurse specialist at ESNEFT. She has had radiotherapy treatment herself so is able to relate to what her patients are feeling and the benefits PBM will bring for them. She said:

"It can really make your mouth sore. It hurts to swallow too which can make eating and drinking difficult, as well as having an impact on your general wellbeing."

"Unlike the side effects, PBM is completely painless. It's very simple to carry out so most patients can do



'It was a breeze'

Glenn Martin (above) and Tony Bell (right) were among the first patients to have PBM at Colchester Hospital.

Tony, 69, from Great Horkesley, said: "It was a breeze. I'm grateful to be able to have it. I've had a very sore mouth, so much so that I've been liquid feeding. The worst thing is that it (treatment) cripples your taste buds. Everything tastes totally different. Savoury things taste awful and sweet things become overly sweet."

Glenn, 69, from Chelmsford, added: "I wish it was available when my treatment started. It will make a massive difference to people."



it themselves and take control of their treatment which is amazing.

"Evidence shows patients need less pain relief when they've had PBM, and they generally cope with their treatment better. It's really exciting we are offering it in our hospitals now."

PBM works by applying infrared light to tissue, via two probes, which can reduce inflammation and improve healing. Funding for two Thor laser machines, one at Colchester Hospital and the other at Ipswich Hospital, was provided thanks to a £31,000 grant from Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity.



Putting patients in control of their treatment

Suzanne Isherwood is ESNEFT's head of radiotherapy.

She said: "Radiotherapy can be daunting and is a treatment where patients very much put themselves in our hands every day. We are training patients to use the equipment, so they have control over what they do. The early feedback we've received on both hospital sites has been very positive."

"We're hoping there will be more use of PBM for other cancers in the future, but we're just using it for head and neck patients for now as that's where the research has been done so far."

'Having two brain tumours has changed how I nurse'

Shock diagnosis hasn't impacted Clare's 'determined and positive' approach

When Clare Ruffell qualified as a nurse associate, she thought it was the start of an exciting new chapter.

Clare, now 49, was working as a health care assistant on D'Arcy Ward at Colchester Hospital. She'd spent two years studying for the qualification while working full time. But when she started getting headaches and falling over, she was referred for an MRI scan in June 2022.

Clare, who lives in Harwich, said: "Within five minutes of the MRI I was taken to the emergency department and was told they'd found two brain tumours. They were on opposite sides of my head – one at the front and one at the back."

Surgery was planned for one of the tumours in August 2022, but Clare was struck with a blood clot in her lung during the operation.

// I nearly didn't make it

"Then they found I also had a deep vein thrombosis. The brain tumours were a shock and then I had this too."

Mum-of-two Clare took 10 months off work to recover, but experienced seizures and needed more surgery for a brain fluid leak.

Although she gets tired, she's changed where she's based and is still determined to work. Clare is now working on Waverley Rehab Unit at Fryatt Hospital, Harwich, while waiting for surgery for the second tumour. "It's really good to be back at work," she said.

"Some days are tiring and some days I still get headaches."



// **It's changed how I nurse. I'm caring for patients who are coming in with the same condition as me, so I know what they're going through.**

Sarah Wiekamp is interim senior matron for North East Essex Community Services, which is part of ESNEFT. She said:

// **We are very proud to have Clare working within our division. Despite adversity, she has remained determined and positive in her working life, having a 'can do' approach.**

ESNEFT to play key part in Martha's Rule rollout

Colchester and Ipswich hospitals will be among the first sites to test and roll out Martha's Rule in its first year.

The purpose of the rule is to provide a consistent and understandable way for patients and families to seek an urgent review if their – or their loved one's – condition deteriorates, and they are concerned it is not being responded to.

Dr Allan Harkness is ESNEFT's Deputy Associate Medical Director for Patient Safety and clinical lead for Martha's Rule.

He said: "Martha's Rule will allow patients, families, and staff to escalate concerns in a way that is easy to do and fast."

"Thankfully we expect escalation of this nature to be very rare. However, this programme has the opportunity to transform patient care and safety if the need arises."



The scheme is named after Martha Mills, 13, pictured. Martha died in 2021 after developing sepsis in hospital. Martha's family's concerns about her deteriorating condition were not responded to, and in 2023 a coroner ruled Martha would probably have survived had she been moved to intensive care earlier.

Research trial gave Scott options of new treatment for blood cancer

Gene mutation led to super fit dad-of-one's diagnosis

Scott Davey's options to treat blood cancer were running out. The 47-year-old had experienced years of health issues and was told he had acquired a genetic mutation that resulted in cancer.

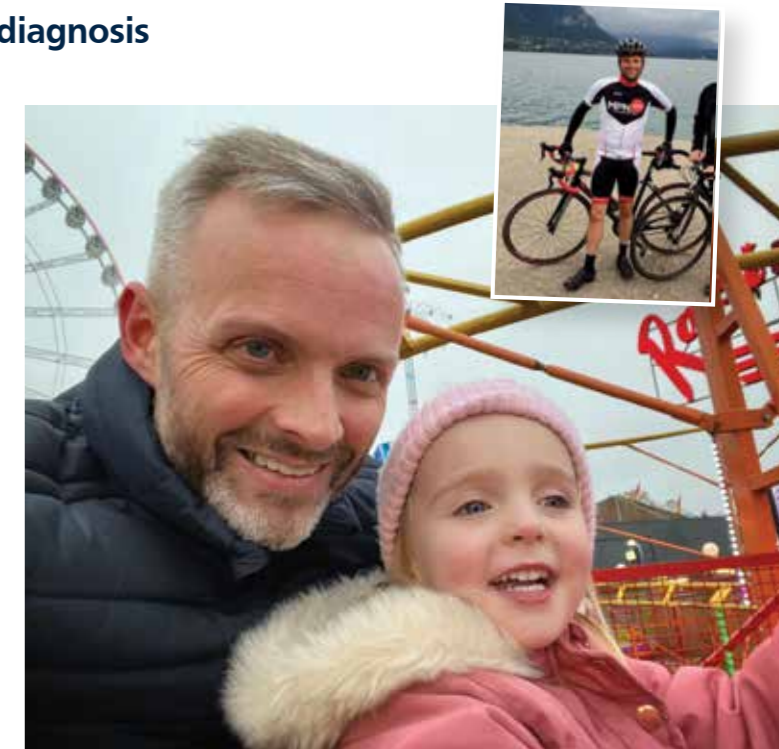
The previously fit and active dad was then given another chance through a research study at Colchester Hospital.

Scott, who works as an automation engineer, is married with a five-year-old daughter. He said: "I was 36, really fit, running every day and very active, but I started getting stomach problems and feeling ill every time I ate."

Scott ended up being rushed to Colchester Hospital and it was discovered his portal vein was blocked. Scott had to stop such intense exercise and a series of medical investigations began while his symptoms were managed.

Then in 2014 it was found Scott had a genetic mutation. This had created abnormalities in his blood count and was the reason he was experiencing stomach pains and lacking energy.

He said: "It was really worrying knowing what this meant for me. I was sent to Guy's and St Thomas for further tests, and



I was told I had the choice of three different medications all with very concerning side effects. I was transferred back to Colchester Hospital's haematology department, and it was decided to continue treating the condition with just Warfarin and regular check-ups.

"I took up cycling, clocking up 200 miles a week, and the regular exercise helped reduce the symptoms."

But Scott's health started to decline over the next few years. It was looking like he would have to decide to start taking one of the previously offered medications. He was told his blood condition had developed into polycythaemia, a form of blood cancer where the bone marrow creates too many red blood cells.

Scott needed to explore different treatment options, which were potentially available through the Mithridate research study being run at Colchester Hospital. Scott, from West Bergholt, said:

// **When I found out about the research study it sounded like a great option as I may be chosen for treatment not usually available.**

"My wife Clare was worried about the side effects, but it's given me another option and one I wouldn't have had before."

Exploring which new treatments are best for patients

Colchester Hospital is one of several sites that is part of the Mithridate trial.

Dr Khalid Saja, consultant haematologist, is clinical lead for haematology, and the principal investigator for the Mithridate study. He said: "This trial is comparing the effectiveness between two treatments for patients diagnosed with polycythaemia vera – an existing treatment, or what we call standard-of-care, and a new treatment called Ruxolitinib."

"This is a randomised trial, so participants can either receive one of the currently existing medications or receive Ruxolitinib. Scott is receiving Ruxolitinib and the study will look at which option will turn out to be best for patients."



Helping patients and staff when they need it most

Fundraising news from Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity

Show your support and colours for our charity

Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity is launching a new and exciting event for 2024.

Entry is open now for the family-friendly Colour Run on Saturday 28 September in Christchurch Park, Ipswich.

You will be showered with bright, colourful powder as you make your way around either a 1km or 5km route in support of the Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity Fund. The fund helps patients and staff when they need it most.

Alternatively, you can choose to fundraise for one of the charity's current appeals: Cancer Wellbeing, Children's Appeal, Staff Wellbeing or for the ward or department at ESNEFT that's closest to your heart. Just share your preference when you sign up.

Entry costs £15 for adults, £10 for children (under fives are free), and £35 for a family ticket. No dogs allowed.

You will get a free t-shirt (age five and over), free sunglasses, a personal colour pouch for the start line, finish line snacks and a finisher's medal.

Scan this QR code to register today



You will be showered with bright, colourful powder as you make your way around either a 1km or 5km route



£33,000 raised by big-hearted Hospital Hero Hikers

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who took part in the Hospital Hero Hike. Together they raised £33,000 by completing the 21-mile countryside walk from Ipswich Hospital to Colchester Hospital.

Much of the money raised will go towards providing colleagues with essential wellbeing support and resources beyond those the NHS can provide. This includes mental health first aid training to make sure one-to-one help is available for staff in crisis and additional new spaces for restful breaks, together with support for physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing.

ESNEFT voluntary services coordinator Fliss Bates took on the hike in memory of her dad with her Ipswich Town season ticket holder husband and brother. They gave up their ticket to the last game of the season, which saw the club's historic return to the Premier League, to take part.



New defibrillators arrive at Ipswich Hospital

Thanks to ESNEFT resuscitation officer Eleanor Green, pictured, and funds from Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity, there are now three new defibrillators at Ipswich Hospital.



The devices are publicly accessible and have been installed in the north entrance, central outpatients and the hospital's main entrance.

Eleanor said: "If I was someone entering the hospital and saw a defibrillator, it would put me at ease and make me feel safer."

"Having defibrillators nearby in non-clinical areas could dramatically help someone in need."

Donors dig deep to support consultant Simon

Consultant radiologist Dr Simon Smith shaved his head to fundraise for ESNEFT's hospitals charity after he was diagnosed with brain cancer.



Simon became unwell and had a seizure in January. It was initially thought to be caused by a virus, but he was later diagnosed with a brain cancer known as glioblastoma.

The 55-year-old underwent surgery in April at Addenbrooke's hospital to determine the type of glioma he has. A few days before his operation he had his head shaved to fundraise for Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity's Cancer Wellbeing Fund.

Simon is based at Ipswich Hospital and his role includes caring for cancer patients. His wife Louise is deputy lead cancer nurse at Ipswich and Colchester hospitals. They are pictured here with their three daughters Lottie, Ellie, and Abbie (in person and on a video call).

They set out to raise £3,500 and have already received an incredible response. So far, Simon's fundraising total stands at more than £9,000, but the family would love to get to £10,000. To make a donation, you can visit the online fundraising page: Type 'Louise Smith Ipswich' into the search bar on the JustGiving website.

You can get signed up to any of this year's events on the charity's website.



Commendation Awards for outstanding colleagues

Our Commendation Awards are our way of saying thank you to colleagues who do extraordinary things. Here we find out who has joined the Commendation hall of fame since the last edition of ESNEFT life. Well done and thank you to all our winners.

Peter Nurse



A hospital staffroom was given a makeover thanks to a nurse handy in DIY.

Peter Stockwell is always going to great lengths to help his team and even decorated the staffroom where colleagues take breaks on his ward.

His team on Nayland Ward at Colchester Hospital wanted to say a big thank you to Peter for giving up his own time and his magnificent effort so they nominated him for an ESNEFT Commendation Award.

Mark Housekeeper



A Colchester Hospital housekeeper helped a patient with alcohol addiction by bravely sharing his own experience as a recovering alcoholic.

Mark McDougall works on Brightlingsea Ward and has been alcohol free for nine years.

But he remembers all too well those first steps to stopping drinking, so he was happy to help when another ward team asked him to support a patient. The patient was ready to go home but she and her family were worried about her leaving hospital care and turning to alcohol.

Mark visited her in hospital and through a friend was able to find an alcohol support group the patient could go to the same day she was discharged, as well as a sponsor to help.

Months later, he is still sending messages of encouragement through the sponsor.

His nomination said: "Mark is a hard-working, kind man who had no hesitation in helping and giving this person hope for her future."

Jalal Doctor



A Colchester Hospital doctor went over and above to help a family in need.

Dr Jalal Weisuddin was on paternity leave when he answered a call for help from a colleague to support an Afghan family with a newborn baby at the hospital.

The family didn't speak English and the maternity team needed to explain some complex medical problems which meant the baby needed to go to another hospital for specialist care. The usual hospital translation services had been explored but weren't suitable in the circumstances.

Jalal is from Afghanistan and went into the hospital when his daughter was only two days old to interpret and support the parents to understand what was happening.

That's why Jalal, whose day job is caring for frail older patients, was given a Commendation award.

Pride Radiographer



Radiographer Pride Mukungurutse is inspiring people into NHS careers.

Thanks to her ground-breaking training academy for budding recruits, more than 100 local people are now working in NHS careers. They're not only in radiography like Pride, but also on wards and in pathology laboratory roles.

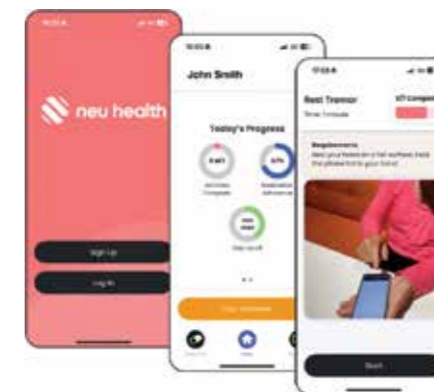
The academy training can involve work placements in microbiology, biochemistry, endoscopy, x-ray and more.

Run in partnership Colchester Institute and other colleges local to ESNEFT, there's interview skills training on offer too, and a guaranteed interview for everyone who completes the course. More than half of the recruits now working in healthcare were previously unemployed.

New smartphone app helps patients with Parkinson's

Technology remotely measures symptoms like voice, balance, reaction time and tremors

People with Parkinson's disease are benefiting from using an app to help monitor and manage their condition.



The Neu Health app has been developed for people with Parkinson's to log their symptoms, complete digital tests and access information about their condition that's tailored to them.

The information inputted into the app is automatically available for clinical teams at ESNEFT. They can then use the data to help shape a patient's treatment and care.

Jane Coiley, 71, pictured below, from north Essex, said:

I use the app all the time and it's helped control when I need to take my tablets – I have to take several a day.

"It's like having someone watch over my shoulder. I also like logging my symptoms and have done several of the tests."



Depending on the information shared and results of digital tests, the app can respond to an individual and offer information about managing their symptoms, such as exercises that may be helpful.

Andrew Cassy, 58, pictured below, who lives near Shingle Street, added: "There are more than 30 symptoms you can log in the app, and you can select the top five of your own to monitor for discussion with your clinical team."



"Having the information there during your appointment will be so valuable when you have precious time with your nurse or neurologist."

The app is a pilot project. It has been developed by Neu Health, supported by ESNEFT's Innovation Team, Health Innovation East and NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (SNEE ICB).

Dr Andrew Graham is a consultant neurologist at ESNEFT. He said: "This is a really interesting opportunity to move monitoring and care for a chronic condition like Parkinson's out of the hospital clinic and into people's homes, where it belongs."

Pop to the pub for Parkinson's support

Working age people with Parkinson's disease can now share experiences and get valuable peer support, thanks to a group that's specially designed to meet their needs.

Ellen McGrath-Blake, who's an assistant with ESNEFT's neuro rehab team at Colchester Hospital, set up the North East Essex Working Age Group on behalf of Parkinson's UK. She decided the perfect place to meet up would be the pub.

Her husband was diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's in 2019.



Ellen said: "Everyone who comes to the group is experiencing similar things, such as trying to explain physical symptoms to young children or, in a lot of cases, juggling work alongside a neurological disease. Our members tell us they find it helpful to share experiences and support each other, which is really encouraging to hear."

The group meets on the second Thursday of every month from 6.30pm at The King's Arms pub in Frating.

More information – including contact details – is available on the Parkinson's UK website:



More information about Parkinson's disease and the symptoms is available on the NHS website.

Celebrate...

Bitesize good news stories from across ESNEFT

A new Women's Network is up and running at ESNEFT. It is the latest addition to a group of existing staff diversity networks which are thriving at the Trust.

This network is for women, and anyone who supports women, to discuss meaningful topics in the workplace and share their experiences.



More than 200 colleagues attended the network's launch event to hear from international speaker, author and Professor of Leadership and Dialogue at Hult International Business School Professor Megan Reitz and MindMommy Coaching founder Laura Guckian.

Kate Read is ESNEFT's Director of People and Organisational Development. She said: "We hope our inaugural Women's Network event gave our attendees a real opportunity to focus on the conversations we have both at work and home around some of the challenges we face, as well as the time to think about and reflect on how we can find balance in our busy lives."

Hundreds of people paid a visit to the ESNEFT marquee at this year's Suffolk Show.

It was full of interactive activities from different departments to highlight the work that happens across our hospitals and in the community.

The activities included kitchen chemistry, finding out how radiotherapy works using Nerf guns and how to balance diabetes with the balloon challenge, and experiencing how patients are moved up from the floor after a fall by trying Suffolk Community Nursing team's 'sit to standing chair'. Visitors could also explore NHS careers and learn more about hospitals charity and volunteers.

Our teams will be taking their activities on the road to the Tendring Show.

Everyone is welcome without discrimination at ESNEFT.

During this year's Pride Month, rainbow flags were flying high at Colchester and Ipswich hospitals, and ESNEFT's LGBTQ+ Network launched new pronoun badges to support inclusion and visibility across the Trust.

The introduction of the badges aims to support colleagues and departments in our hospitals and the community with the use of gender neutral and inclusive language.

They are free to any colleague who wishes to wear one – whether they are part of the LGBTQIA+ community or an ally.

Staff and allies also shared their stories as part of a new project called Pride: My Story. Their accounts included what Pride month means to them, how the NHS can support LGBTQIA+ patients and staff, their personal 'coming out' stories, adversities they've faced and / or the role of being an ally.

Anatomical pathology technician (APT) Alison Ryley has been accepted to join the Kenyon Responder Programme, run by Kenyon Emergency Services.

Alison, who will continue to work full time in the mortuary at Colchester Hospital, can now be called on to lend her skills, knowledge, and experience to support those affected by major incidents worldwide.



Kenyon responds to major incidents of all causes and scales. Part of this response includes setting up and staffing mortuaries to cope with mass fatalities. That's where Alison comes in.

She said: "I feel quite excited. Obviously, I don't want there to be a disaster, but I want to prove to myself that I can work in a fast paced, challenging environment. I've worked here for 19 years now, and I know I'm good at my job, but I want to challenge myself in a different way and to help when the time comes."



Patients, visitors and staff at ESNEFT came together to show their support for the Armed Forces community in east Suffolk and north Essex.

Flags were raised at Colchester and Ipswich hospitals and the efforts of our reservists were celebrated as part of the Trust's Armed Forces Week celebrations.

ESNEFT Chief Executive Nick Hulme said: "Thank you to our Armed Forces community and the contribution they've made and continue to make to our lives."

Tracy Pagent is the chair of ESNEFT's Armed Forces Network. She added: "Armed Forces Week is a chance for us to show our support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community: from currently serving personnel to service families, veterans, and cadets."

A diabetes nurse has won a national award for leading a project that improved outcomes for frail, elderly people treated with insulin.

Community diabetes specialist nurse Laura Gilligan won the Service Improvement Project of the Year award at the Diabetes Nursing Awards 2024.

The project improved patient outcomes, reduced district nurses' workloads and decreased admissions.

Laura was recognised for demonstrating outstanding commitment, innovation, and excellence in diabetes care.

Laura, who is based at the Diabetes Centre at Ipswich Hospital, said: "It is amazing to win this award. Attending the ceremony was so special and an incredible opportunity to see everyone being supported and celebrated."



A new health passport has been launched at ESNEFT.

It is a vital document that's designed to be a quick and easy way for patients with a learning disability and/or autistic people to tell healthcare staff what they need when receiving medical care and treatment.

The My Health Passport includes important information, such as someone's likes and dislikes, and how to communicate with them effectively so their voice is always heard. It can also share details of any reasonable adjustments a patient may need during their hospital stay or appointment.

You can fill in the health passport on your own or with support if you are not able to complete it for yourself.

If you already have a health passport, you do not need to complete another one. If you don't have one, you can download a health passport on the learning disabilities and autism support page of the ESNEFT website.



A new community clinic will give patients the flexibility to book appointments to suit them and receive better one-to-one care.

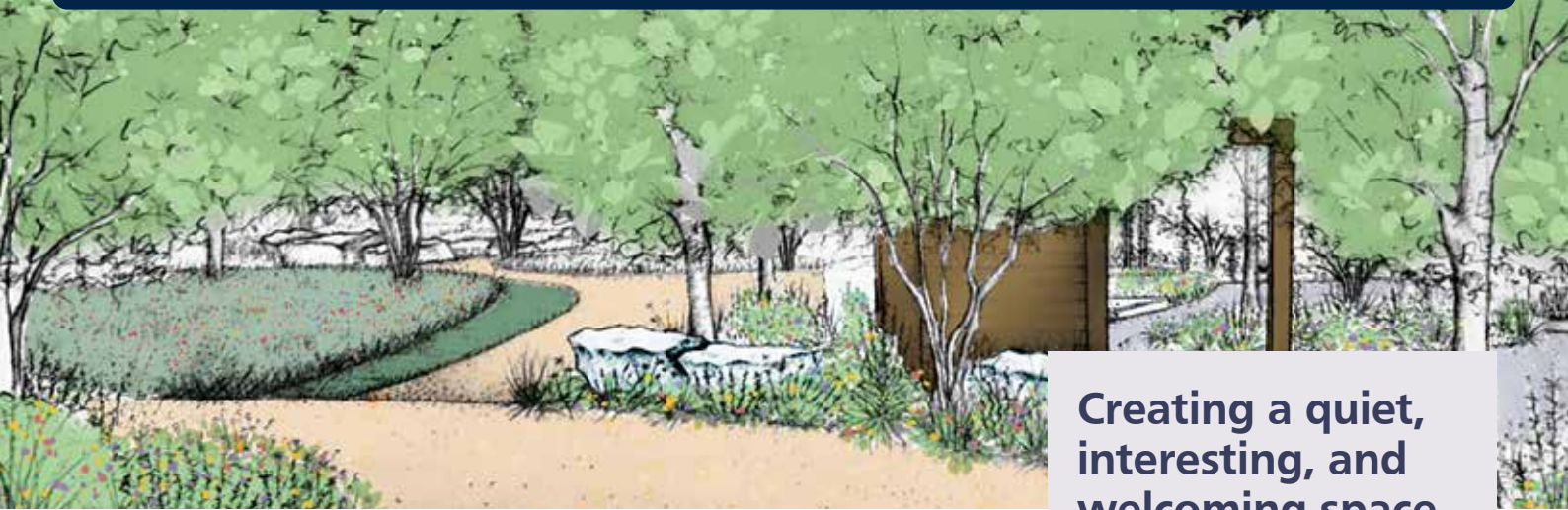
The Woodbridge Integrated Nursing Team (INT) has converted a former office space into a clinic for ESNEFT and Suffolk County Council teams to use.

It will enable non-housebound patients to book appointments that are convenient for them, so they don't have to wait in at home for a nurse to visit.

Heather Thompson, lead nurse for the Integrated Nursing Team, said: "We will have more control over the timing of our appointments, meaning if a patient has complex needs, we can provide them the time to explore these and provide patient education around self-management.

"We will also be saving time as Woodbridge is a massive rural area and it can sometimes take us 45 minutes to get to one patient."





New wellbeing garden coming to Colchester Hospital

Quiet and welcoming space for patients, visitors, and staff

A new wellbeing garden is being built for patients, visitors, and staff at Colchester Hospital.

It is hoped it will be a space where people can take time out to pause and reflect, whether they are attending an appointment, visiting a relative or taking a break at work. It will also be a place where people can learn gardening skills and get involved in taking care of it.

Designed by award winning garden designer and Gardener's World presenter Adam Frost, the aim of the new wellbeing garden is that it will be a relaxing and restorative space for patients, visitors, and staff.

Mandy Jordan is Associate Director of Charities and Voluntary Services at ESNEFT.

She said: "We can't thank Adam and our charity partners enough for their support in making the wellbeing

garden at Colchester Hospital a reality.

Outdoor spaces in hospitals are invaluable – to patients and their families, but also to our devoted and hardworking staff."

The garden, which opens this summer, will be a vital area for the community, creating several projects for those working at or visiting the hospital to take part in.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Community Outreach team already has begun to work with ESNEFT and local volunteers to create a gardening club to help manage and maintain the garden once it is built. The club has already started to tidy up and plant existing spaces around the hospital.

The RHS Community Outreach team is also running wellbeing activities for staff and patients for three years.

Creating a quiet, interesting, and welcoming space

Hospital staff and Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity have worked with the RHS on the look and feel of the garden. At its heart will be sustainability and accessibility.



The wellbeing garden will include curved paths, wildflowers, rock gardens and areas for private reflection. Other key elements of the design include:

- Sociable seating areas and more private seating areas to connect or reflect.
- An all-weather shelter for nature-based activities and gardening club sessions.
- New paths weaving through the trees, wildflowers, and drought tolerant planting.
- New plants alongside the car park to reduce noise and pollution.
- Access for all, inclusive and welcoming for whole community.

Located at the front of the hospital, next to the Cancer Wellbeing Centre, existing lake and close to the main car park, the garden has also been designed to be resilient to climate change.

Funding behind the project

The wellbeing garden is being funded entirely from charitable donations, with thanks to:

- Generous donations to staff wellbeing via Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity
- The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)
- The Oak Foundation
- NHS Charities Together Greener Communities Fund and its funding partners, including Starbucks and Hubbub